



Congressman Jon Porter

Monthly Update

April 2004

Porter Report – Monthly Update



As your Representative in Congress, I am proud to represent the Third Congressional District, one of the fastest growing regions in the United States.

This past month I have been busy working on several issues important to our State, including continuing our fight against Yucca Mountain, increasing funding for education in Nevada's schools, and securing federal transportation dollars for projects in Southern Nevada. In addition, I have

been actively working to fight the epidemic of drugged driving. Through my efforts, the US House of Representatives recently passed legislation to address this issue.

Congress Addresses Porter Drugged Driving Initiative



Congressman Porter stands at a press conference beside Brittany Faber who testified at the State Legislature when Porter led the effort as a State Senator to fight drugged driving

On April 2, 2004, the US House of Representatives passed the first piece of federal legislation addressing the national epidemic of drugged driving. I joined with Congressman Rob Portman of Ohio to author the Drug Impaired Driving Research and Prevention Act which was included as Title II, Section 2011 of the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy of Users (HR 3550). I was proud to partner with Congressman Portman on this accomplishment and will work aggressively to ensure its passage in the US Senate. I was also thankful for the support I received from the Chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Congressman Don Young, and from members of the House Leadership. I also worked in coordination with the White House Drug Czar and the Speaker of the House's Anti-Drug Taskforce.

Although it has not received the same attention as driving under the influence of alcohol, drugged

driving is a growing epidemic in the United States. Drugged driving accidents have taken thousands of lives that have shattered the dreams and hopes of many families. While all states have laws relating to drinking and driving and

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national standards against which to measure alcohol impairment, few states have enacted laws to address drug impairment. I have embarked on a campaign to fight drugged driving and to raise the level of awareness that drugged driving is a deadly killer that must be addressed.

As a State Senator, I sponsored Nevada's first law to combat drugged driving, and I proud to have brought this debate to the national level as a United States Congressman. I believe that it is vital to addresses this growing danger on our highways.

The Drug Impaired Driving, Research, and Prevention Act provides \$7.2 million to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for the research of drugged driving, requires NHTSA to coordinate federal efforts to combat drugging driving and to provide an annual report to Congress on what states are doing to combat drugged driving, and provides a template states can use for drafting programs to combat drugged driving.

The issue of drugged driving first came to my attention when a young woman in my State Senate district, Brittany Faber, came to me after the death of her father. In 1997, William Faber's life was cut short after driving his daughter Brittany to school in Henderson by a drugged driver who was high on marijuana. Prosecutors could not prove the driver was impaired because there was not a standard for drivers with drugs in their system at the time as there is for drunken drivers. Brittany and her family described the grief and anguish not only from losing a son, husband, and father, but also their disappointment of the lack of justice. I was proud to lead the effort in 1999, with the help of the Faber family and others, to pass legislation in Nevada to penalize individuals for driving under the influence of a prohibited substance.

It is my hope that this new national legislation will improve traffic safety and reduce traffic fatalities. It is important that we have addressed this issue before more damage occurs and more lives are lost.

Porter Continues Fight to Stop Yucca Mountain



Congressman Porter testified on March 25, 2004 before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality

Last month I testified before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality in opposition to HR 3981, legislation that would remove the Yucca Mountain project from Congress' budgetary authority and would eliminate any Congressional oversight of the Yucca Mountain project in the future.

With all the problems that have plagued the Yucca Mountain project since its inception and the hundreds of scientific questions still left unanswered, I am adamantly opposed to such a budgetary gimmick being given consideration when now more than ever Yucca Mountain, the federal agencies involved in this project, and the people of Nevada need the

support of Congressional authority. The idea of transporting tens of thousands of tons of nuclear waste across the country was not a good idea before

September 11, 2001, and it is certainly not a good idea now. Previously we have never thought of terrorist using fueled passenger planes as weapons. We must not make the same mistake with trucks, trains, and barges that could transport nuclear waste past cities such as Chicago, Toledo, Los Angeles, Dallas, Pittsburg, and Denver just to name a few.

I will do everything in my power to protect Nevada and the American people from this flawed project. The transport of nuclear waste to the Yucca Mountain site requires the greatest deal of oversight. For this reason, I insist that Congress maintain its oversight authority over such potentially dangerous projects.

Porter Fights for Nevada Transportation Funding:

House Transportation Bill Includes More Than \$1.3 Billion for State of Nevada Over Six Years



Congressman Porter serves as a member
of the House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure.

Nevada's Third Congressional District is one of the fastest growing areas in the nation. As our communities continue to grow, it is important to expand our surface transportation capacity here in Southern Nevada in order to prevent traffic problems, improve our economy, create jobs, and improve the quality of life for all Nevadans.

On March 24, 2004, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, of which I am a member, met to consider the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (HR 3550), also known as TEA-LU. At this meeting I fought to ensure Nevada received its fair share of federal transportation funding.

On April 2, 2004, the full House of Representatives passed this legislation in a bipartisan vote of 357-65. TEA-LU reauthorizes the federal highway, public transportation, highway safety, and motor carrier safety programs for 6 years, from fiscal years 2004 through 2009. Differences in the House and Senate versions of this legislation are now being reconciled by a bicameral conference committee. The resulting conference report will then be considered by both the House and Senate before its presentation to the President for enactment into law.

Projects funded in the House version of TEA-LU include \$21 million for I-515 interchanges in Henderson, \$10 million for I-15 interchange with Cactus, \$6 million for US-95 interchange with Horse Road, Las Vegas, \$6 million for the Hoover Dam Bypass, Boulder City extension, \$1.5 million for Lake Mead Parkway Improvements in Henderson, and \$1.5 for I-15 interchanges in Mesquite.

In addition, funding was authorized for the Broadbent Monorail in Las Vegas.

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Porter Instrumental in Census Bureau Funding to Increase Title One Education Grants



Congressman Porter is a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce

On March 15, 2004, I was proud to announce that the Department of Education has allocated \$48,618,548 in Fiscal Year 2004 for Title I Education Grants in Clark County. Title I Education funding is used to pay for teaches and programs that benefit low income schools. This funding represents an increase of 24 percent over funding the year before.

The increased funding levels by the Department of Education is great news for students in Southern

Nevada. I worked closely with Labor – Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Ralph Regula (R-OH) to supply the US Census Bureau with the funding necessary to carry out yearly studies on population levels throughout the country. Previously these studies were only carried out every other year. Yearly studies benefit fast growing states like Nevada allowing funding to catch up with our extraordinary growth.

With the tremendous influx of students in Southern Nevada, federal funds must be appropriated in a fair manner. I am proud to have had a hand in making sure the fast-growing student population in our area is reflected accurately by the federal government. These funds will provide greater services for our most needy children.

Chairman Ralph Regula stated “I am pleased to have worked with Congressman Porter on this census issue. He approached me early in the budget process and expressed his concerns about the need to adequately fund the rapidly growing schools in his district, and getting timely census data is an important step in responding with corresponding federal dollars.”



As a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, I am uniquely positioned to to keep fighting to ensure that Nevada’s students receive their fair share of the education dollar.

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Nevada to Have Second Statue in US Capitol



Recently I was proud to join with the rest of the Nevada Congressional Delegation in announcing the introduction of legislation to provide for the admittance of a second Nevada statue in the US Capitol's National Statuary Hall honoring Sarah Winnemucca.

Sarah Winnemucca was an activist, author, and peacemaker. She served our nation as an interpreter for the US military and worked tirelessly to improve relations between settlers and Native Americans. Sarah Winnemucca is an appropriate tribute to the Silver State and I am proud to honor her memory as Nevada second representative in

the National Statuary Hall collection in our nation's Capitol, and as only the eighth woman ever to be represented.

Each State is allowed two statues in the National Statuary Hall Collection. Nevada currently only displays one statue, that of former Senator Patrick McCarran. In 2001, the Nevada State Legislature unanimously passed a bill designating Sarah Winnemucca for the state's second statue. Recently sculptor Benjamin Victor's depiction of Winnemucca was chosen to represent Nevada in Statuary Hall. In Victor's interpretation, Winnemucca holds a book in her left hand, representing education and the high moral values of American Indians.

The Nevada Women's History Project initiated the statue effort and was assigned responsibility for raising funds necessary to accomplish this project. For additional information about the statue project, visit the Nevada Women's History Project website at www.nevadawomen.org.

Contact Me

Should you require any additional information, if you would like to inform me of your views, or if you require assistance with your interactions with the Federal Government, please contact me anytime in either my Henderson, NV or Washington, DC office. You can also find information available online at www.house.gov/Porter.